

Script
Boy Scout Award for Ricky Mathews
Taping at WLOX-TV studios
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About :90

In the early days after Katrina I got to know the young publisher of the daily newspaper here on the Coast very well. Over the past two and a half years Ricky Mathews and I have learned together there's nothing easy about recovering from the worst natural disaster in American history.

Some of you may already know this, but six days after Katrina hit Ricky invited me to a meeting at the Sun-Herald with the Gulf Coast business leadership. At that meeting, the idea of creating the Governor's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding, and Renewal was born; Ricky was instrumental in the Commission's birth and success in steering a path to recovery that focused on meeting local needs.

During one of President Bush's visits with the Governor's Commission, Ricky spoke to the group. After his presentation I leaned over and said to President Bush, "I'm glad Ricky Mathews isn't running for Governor!" And I meant it.

Under Ricky's leadership The Sun-Herald won a Pulitzer Prize for its coverage of Hurricane Katrina, which reflects the superior professionalism and integrity that marks his job. We also know Ricky for his strong community involvement and his personal commitment to making things better. He is a thoughtful, passionate man with an unbridled admiration for the people of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Ricky, Marsha and I could not be more pleased that the Pine Burr Council of the Boy Scouts of America has selected you to receive the Distinguished Citizen Award. You've earned the recognition through your leadership, dedication and commitment not only to Scouting but also to rebuilding this precious place we know as the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Thank you for what you do, and congratulations.

